

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00  
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AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 5810

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS)  
SUBJECT: ISRAELI MEDIA REPORTS ON VANCE MIDDLE EAST TOUR

SUMMARY. ISRAELI MEDIA REPORT ON CURRENT VANCE MISSION,  
EXPRESSING NO SURPRISE AT SYRIAN REJECTION OF EGYPTIAN  
"WORKING GROUP" PROPOSAL. THE CABINET WILL DECIDE ON  
ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAM ON SUNDAY. ISRAELI OFFICIALS  
REPORTEDLY EXPECT VANCE TO CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS IN NEW  
YORK DESPITE NEGATIVE REPLY FROM ASSAD. A COMMENTATOR  
WORNDERS IF SAUDI ARABIA WILL PRESSURE SYRIA. AND RABIN  
SEES VANCE TRIP AS FIRST TEST OF BEGIN POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. SECRETARY VANCE'S CURRENT SWING THROUGH THE MIDDLE  
EAST IS RECEIVING FULL COVERAGE IN THE ISRALI MEDIA, WITH  
REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENTS NUMEROUS COMMEN-  
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TARIES ON ME PEACE PROCESS, AND A MODEST AMOUNT OF RE-  
PORTED "REACTIONS" FROM UNNAMED JERUSALEM SOURCES. BEGIN  
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE GENERALLY NOT BEEN MAKING  
COMMENTS FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION.

2. PRESIDENT SADAT'S PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A WORKING  
GROUP OF ARAB AND ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTERS WAS GENER-

ALLY WELL-RECEIVED IN ISRAEL: THE GOVERNMENT LET IT BE KNOWN THAT IT WOULD PARTICIPATE AND THE MEDIA APPLAUDED SADAT'S SUGGESTION AS A MEANS WHEREBY THE PROBLEM OF PLO REPRESENTATION MIGHT BE AVOIDED. FOR PRECISELY THIS REASON, THE SYRIANS AND PLO WERE EXPECTED TO REJECT THE PROPOSAL, AND WHEN THEY DID SO CONFIRMED ISRAELI PREDICTIONS. NEVERTHELESS, ACCORDING TO A RADIO ISRAEL REPORT AUGUST 4, "THE ASSESSMENT IN THE CAPITAL IS THAT ASAD WISHES TO MAINTAIN THE GOOD ATMOSPHERE IN HIS RELATIONS WITH WASHINGTON AND DOES NOT WANT THE BLAME FOR THE FAILURE OF THE VANCE TRIP TO FALL ON HIM."

3. IN ANOTHER REPORT AUGUST 4, ISRAEL TV ANNOUNCED THAT "ISRAEL WILL REACT TO THE SUBSTANCE OF VANCE'S PROPOSALS, WITH THE ONLY NO BEING THE REFUSAL TO ALLOW PARTICIPATION OF A PLO REPRESENTATIVE IN THE WORKING GROUP, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE WOULD BE MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY CONCERNING THE PROCEDURES OF THE TALKS IN NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON." AN OPPOSITE POSITION WAS TAKEN BY INFORMATION ADVISOR SHMUEL KATZ, WHO TOLD DAVAR'S DANNY BLOCH THAT "WE SHALL NOT ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS WITH VANCE ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. I DON'T KNOW HOW THE DISCUSSIONS WILL DEVELOP, BUT I ASSUME THAT THERE WILL BE NO DEVIATION FROM THE POSITION WE HAVE ADOPTED FROM THE OUTSET, THAT IS, THAT WE WILL ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS ON A PEACE TREATY WITH THE ARABS."

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TATIONS ON A PEACE TREATY WITH THE ARABS."

4. PRESS REPORTS ANNOUNCE THAT THE CABINET WILL DECIDE ON SUNDAY (AUGUST 7) THE MAKE-UP OF ISRAEL'S NEGOTIATING TEAM: IT MAY BE LIMITED TO BEGIN, DAYAN, AND WEIZMAN OR IT MAY ALSO INCLUDE EHRLICH, BURG, AND SHARON.

5. CITING SOURCES IN JERUSALEM, YEDIOT REPORTER TZIMUKI STATES THAT ISRAELI OFFICIALS ASSUME THAT VANCE WILL STEP UP HIS EFFORTS TO PREPARE FOR GENEVA TALKS WHEN THE ME FOREIGN MINISTERS COME TO THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY NEXT MONTH; VANCE WILL PERSIST IN HIS ONGOING EFFORTS DESPITE THE NEGATIVE ANSWERS OUT OF DAMASCUS. ISRAELI OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT ASAD, BY HIS REJECTION OF THE SADAT WORKING-GROUP PROPOSAL, HAS SHOWN THAT HE IS NOT READY FOR AN EARLY CONVENING OF THE GENEVA TALKS IN OCTOBER, NOR IS HE READY AT THIS STVAGE FOR PLO REPRESENTATION IN GENEVA, ACCORDING TO TZIMUKI.

6. COMMENTING ON THE VANCE MISSION, YEDIOT'S GUINEY SAYS THAT ITS SUCCESS OR FAILURE WILL TO A LARGE EXTENT

DEPEND ON SAUDI ARABIA. THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE SAUDIS WILL EXERT THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE SYRIANS NOW AND WHETHER THE PRESSURE WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY STRONG. A SAUDI-INSPIRED ARAB SUMMIT MAY BE GENERATED BY THE FAILURE OR PARTIAL FAILURE OF THE VANCE MISSION, SAYS GUINEY.

6. EX-PRIME MINISTER RABIN WRITES IN YEDIOT THAT ISRAELIS WILL NOW PERHAPS FIND OUT WHETHER THE SECRETARY OF STATE DECIDED TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROPOSALS MR. BEGIN MADE TO PRESIDENT CARTER. RABIN FEARS, HOWEVER, THAT VANCE WILL PRESENT THEM AS U.S. PROPOSALS THE WELL-KNOWN STANDS MADE BY PRESIDENT CARTER. AND IF VANCE BRINGS UP THE IDEA OF ISRAELI-JORDANIAN "TRUSTEE-UNCLASSIFIED

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SHIP OVER JUDEA AND SAMARIA FOR A GIVEN PERIOD OF TIME, TO BE FOLLOWED BY A REFERENDUM," IT WOULD BE "GRAVE IN THE EXTREME." THAT VANCE MAY BE BRINGING AMERICAN PROPOSALS DRAWN UP WITHOUT PRIOR COORDINATION WITH ISRAEL MEANS DANGER FOR ISRAEL'S VITAL INTERESTS. LEWIS

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